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Message Text

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70
ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4233

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: EDITORIAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S ACCESSION

1. SUMMARY. ATTITUDE OF CANADIAN PRESS, IS GENERALLY ONE OF RELIEF OVER ORDERLY CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION AND GENERAL OPTIMISM ABOUT PRESIDENT FORD, BOTH AS REGARDS ENDING US "NATIONAL NIGHTMARE" AND AFFECT OF HIS ACCESSION OF US-CANADIAN RELATIONS. WHILE MOST PAPERS NOTE THAT PRESIDENT FORD IS "UNKNOWN QUANTITY" FOR CANADIANS HIS REPUTATION FOR CANDOR AND OPENNESS IS WELCOMED. END SUMMARY.

2. SEVERAL EDITORIALS EXPRESS RELIEF AT RESIGNATION AND NOTE THAT US INSTITUTIONS CONTINUE STRONG. MONTREAL GAZETTE: "THE COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS -- THE ORGANS OF THE BODY POLITIC -- HAVE PROVED STRONG AND RESILENT AND HAVE NOW EXPELLED THE CANCER... GERALD FORD MAY BE JUST THE MAN... TO PRESIDE OVER THE RECUPERATION." TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL QUOTES PRESIDENT FORD'S STATEMENT THAT US IS "A GOVERNMENT OF LAWS AND NOT OF MEN. THAT WAS A REASSURING AFFIRMATION... THE WATERGATE YEARS HAVE SEEN A SAD DEPARTURE FROM THE RULE OF LAW TO THE RULE OF MEN."

3. PRESIDENT FORD'S REPUTATION FOR INTEGRITY AND CANDOR HAVE BEEN WIDELY WELCOMED. OTTAWA CITIZEN: "THE MOST ENCOURAGING NOTE IN THE FIRST WORDS GERALD
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FORD SPOKE TO HIS PEOPLE AS PRESIDENT WAS THE POWERFUL

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EMPHASIS ON TRUTH, CANDOR, OPENNESS SINCE HE IS, IF
NOTHING ELSE,AN OPEN MAN, THESE WORDS CARRIED CONVICTION."
TORONTO STAR: "IF FORD'S MAIN TASK IS TO REUNITE THE NATION
AND RETURN INTEGRITY TO A TARNISHED GOVERNMENT, THEN -- ON
HIS RECORD -- HE IS LIKELY TO DO A CREDITABLE JOB."
GLOBE AND MAIL WASINGTON CORRESPONDENT ROSS
MUNRO PREDICTS PRIMIN TRUDEAU WILL "FIND IT EASIER
TO TALK TO MR. FORD."

4. TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL DEVOTES ONE EDITORIAL
TO PRAISE OF APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE
TRANSITION OF PRESIDENCY. GOVERNOR SCRANTON,
AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD, SECRETARY MORTON AND MR. MARSH
ARE "AN ATTRACTIVE GROUP" OF "UNDOUBTED ABILITIES".
PRESIDENT FORD HAS "MOVED SOUNDLY IN HIS CHOICE OF
ADVISERS."

5. OFFICIAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S ACCESSION
HAS BEEN LOW-KEY AND DIGNIFIED.PRIMIN TRUDEAU
LIMITED HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT TO EFFECT ON RELATIONS
WITH CANADA, SAYING HE EXPECTS PRESIDENT FORD TO BE
"FAIR" TOWARD CANADA AS PRESIDENT NIXON WAS. GLOBE AND
MAIL CITES SENIOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXPERT TO EFFECT THAT
"WE SHOULD NOT EXPECT ANY GREAT CHANGES IN CANADA-US
RELATIONS... THERE HAS BEEN A STABLE SITUATION IN CANADA-US
RELATIONS FOR THE PAST 18 TO 24 MONTHS, AND BUSINESS HAS
GONE ON WITHOUT MAJOR DIFFICULTIES." PRESIDENT FORD
"CONSIDERS HIMSELF AN INTERNATIONALIST, NOT A PROTECTIONIST,
AND HAS VOTED IN FAVOR OF ALL TRADE EXPANSION BILLS IN THE PAST..."

6. GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
IS TEMPERED IN SOME EDITORIALS BY UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT
FUTURE US ECONOMIC POLICIES AND THEIR EFFECT ON CANADA.
GLOBE AND MAIL AND TORONTO STAR CAUTION THAT PRESIDENT
FORD MAY BE "MORE CONSERVATIVE THAN NIXON" ON BALANCE,
HOWEVER, PRESIDENT FORD HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY CANADIAN PRESS.
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